

LESSON 9

TEACHING AND TRAINING

Scripture Texts: Isaiah 28:9-10; Proverbs 20:11; Deuteronomy 11:18-19; 31:11-13; Proverbs 13:24; 22:6

Teaching is showing children how to do something. Training is having them do it. When training requires punishment, it should be given. Parents should use firmness and kindness, not laxness and severity. It is a continuous work needing love, wisdom, and divine direction. The reward comes when all concerned see the children become strong Christians.

The home has the children seven days a week, the Sunday school but a short part of one day. The home has a much greater influence and so, the greater responsibility.

MEMORY VERSE: *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

Proverbs 22:6

Start Teaching the Very Young

Isaiah 28:9 Whom did God say He would **teach knowledge** and **make to understand doctrine**? The children, young children, those **weaned from the milk . . .** The young can be taught. They can receive **knowledge** and **doctrine**. In the teaching of beginners, impressions are made which last a lifetime. In the first years children learn more than in any other span of life.

Isaiah 28:10 The teaching must be done **precept upon precept** and **line upon line**.

It is a continuing task, as building a building. First, simple commands and truths, repeated often. Over and over, again and again, the teaching must go on. Telling, showing, explaining, praying. Watching to curb a wrong habit, to develop a good one. **Here a little, and there a little.** Gradually the child's character grows. This is work for parents, not baby sitters. It takes constant love, watchfulness, authority, care, and prayer.

Proverbs 20:11 **Even a child is known by his doings**—Known because he has a definite character formed very early. Within the hands of the parents is placed the responsibility to see that this character is cultivated and strengthened until he leaves their home.

Tools for the Work

Deuteronomy 11:18-19 God has given parents the tools for their work. The Bible—the Word of God, and the Spirit of God. First, **lay up these my words in your heart**. Learn the Bible, love the Bible, and live its teachings. There must be TEACHING, and there must be good EXAMPLE also. Then **ye shall teach them your children**. This takes more than Bible reading in our daily family worship. **Speaking of them (God's words) when thou sittest . . . walkest . . . liest down . . . risest up**. The Bible is to be the familiar, everyday guide of the actions of each family member.

In the modern home there is a failing of parents in presiding over the moral and spiritual training of their children. Let us not be deceived into believing that young people know what is right and can be depended upon to do what is right, without help from others in the home. We have to learn about moral and spiritual values exactly the same way we learn mathematics. We must be trained in morals, or we grow up morally ignorant, inconsistent in habits, and unstable in character. The home is humanity's greatest school. The only sound basis for conduct is Christian faith. Parents teach their children more than all other teachers combined. Remember that lessons are taught by neglect as well as by faithfulness

to duty, and the lessons you teach by neglect, you will later regret bitterly.

Deuteronomy 31:11-13 Here we find instructions for the public teaching of God's Word in the congregation. In the place chosen by God, **men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates**, were to be gathered while God's Law was read. They were to (1) **hear** and (2) **learn** and (3) **fear the Lord** and (4) **do all the words of this law**. The teaching of children is emphasized in verse 13.

Discipline

Proverbs 13:24 Another important department in the bringing up of children is DISCIPLINE. Discipline is not just punishment, but it includes it. **He that spareth his rod** does not punish the child when the child needs it—**hateth his son**—is doing harm to him. A child needs punishment when (1) he knows he is doing wrong, (2) he chose to do it, and (3) he does not show remorse for it. If words of admonition do not change his will, punishment is needed just as food is needed when he is hungry. A parent who loves his child punishes him at the right times. Right punishment always has love joined with it. A child needs to know that his parents love him even when punishing.

Training Is Lasting

Proverbs 22:6 Discipline is not all punishment. Punishment is the negative side. Training is the positive. **Train up a child in the way he should go**. A child is not yet trained when he is TOLD the right way. He is being trained only when he DOES the thing, when he practices it. Teach him, then go on to train him. **When he is old, he will not depart from it**. He may depart from the right way, but he will remember the training.

What children do we have in our care? We do not know now. Possibly, future teachers, preachers, missionaries, martyrs, great fathers and mothers, and great saints of God. Whether they develop or not is largely dependent upon our handling of them. A great privilege and responsibility is ours.

JUST A THOUGHT

Love and admiration for the ways of this world cannot exist side by side with sincere devotion to the ideals of Christ.